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## GRAPES OF THORNS

By CAPTAIN T. E. STEWART, M.C.

(*Border Regiment*).

Captain Stewart, who is frequently inspired by his experiences at the front, feels the pathos of war too deeply to deck it with ornament, and his reticence is more effective than any poetical rhetoric could be. His characteristic is a tender thoughtfulness, expressed with a delicacy of touch sometimes reminiscent of the seventeenth century lyrists. Here is a lyrical portrayal of a not uncommon experience remarkable for its felicitous sincerity:—[*Ed.*]

I was afraid of Fear,  
Not of the foe;  
And when I thought that those I hold most dear  
My craven soul would know  
And turn away ashamed, who praised before,  
Ashamed and deep distressed to find it so,  
I was afraid the more.

Lo, when I joined the fight,  
And bared my breast  
To all the darts of that wild hellish night,  
I, only, stood the test,  
For Fear, which I had feared, deserted then,  
And forward blithely at the foe I prest  
King of myself again.

*Envoy.*

Blessed be God above  
For His sweet care,  
Who heard the prayers of those whom most I love  
And my poor suppliance there,  
Who brought me forth in life and limb all whole,  
Who blessed my powers with His divine repair,  
And gave me back my soul!